

Subpart I—The Record**§ 81.91 Official transcript.**

The Department will designate the official reporter for all hearings. The official transcripts of testimony taken, together with any exhibits, briefs, or memoranda of law filed therewith shall be filed with the Department. Transcripts of testimony in hearings may be obtained from the official reporter by the parties and the public at rates not to exceed the maximum rates fixed by the contract between the Department and the reporter. Upon notice to all parties, the presiding officer may authorize corrections to the transcript which involve matters of substance.

§ 81.92 Record for decision.

The transcript of testimony, exhibits, and all papers and requests filed in the proceedings, except the correspondence section of the docket, including rulings and any recommended or initial decision shall constitute the exclusive record for decision.

Subpart J—Posthearing Procedures, Decisions**§ 81.101 Posthearing briefs: Proposed findings and conclusions.**

(a) The presiding officer shall fix the time for filing posthearing briefs, which may contain proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law, and, if permitted, reply briefs.

(b) Briefs should include a summary of the evidence relied upon together with references to exhibit numbers and pages of the transcript, with citations of the authorities relied upon.

§ 81.102 Decisions following hearing.

When the time for submission of posthearing briefs has expired, the presiding officer shall certify the entire record, including his recommended findings and proposed decision, to the responsible Department official; or if so authorized he shall make an initial decision. A copy of the recommended findings and proposed decision, or of the initial decision, shall be served upon all parties, and amici, if any.

§ 81.103 Exceptions to initial or recommended decisions.

Within 20 days after the mailing of an initial or recommended decision, any party may file exceptions to the decision, stating reasons therefor, with the reviewing authority. Any other party may file a response thereto within 30 days after the mailing of the decision. Upon the filing of such exceptions, the reviewing authority shall review the decision and issue its own decision thereon.

§ 81.104 Final decisions.

(a) Where the hearing is conducted by a hearing examiner who makes an initial decision, if no exceptions thereto are filed within the 20-day period specified in § 81.103, such decision shall become the final decision of the Department, and shall constitute “final agency action” within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 704 (formerly section 10(c) of the Administrative Procedure Act), subject to the provisions of § 81.106.

(b) Where the hearing is conducted by a hearing examiner who makes a recommended decision, or upon the filing of exceptions to a hearing examiner’s initial decision, the reviewing authority shall review the recommended or initial decision and shall issue its own decision thereon, which shall become the final decision of the Department, and shall constitute “final agency action” within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 704 (formerly section 10(c) of the Administrative Procedure Act), subject to the provisions of § 81.106.

(c) All final decisions shall be promptly served on all parties, and amici, if any.

§ 81.105 Oral argument to the reviewing authority.

(a) If any party desires to argue a case orally on exceptions or replies to exceptions to an initial or recommended decision, he shall make such request in writing. The reviewing authority may grant or deny such requests in its discretion. If granted, it will serve notice of oral argument on all parties. The notice will set forth the order of presentation, the amount of time allotted, and the time and place for argument. The names of persons who will argue should be filed